

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 An apparatus for transferring a container stored with a workpiece (for
example, a semiconductor wafer container) between manufacturing stations
includes: a manufacturing station that includes a generally horizontal support
platform; one or more guides for guiding a vehicle; a vehicle configured to travel on
one or more guides to a position below support platform; and a vertical translation
10 unit attached to one of the manufacturing station and the vehicle that vertically
translates the container between a lowered position beneath the support platform
and a raised position above the support platform. In this configuration, the
apparatus can provide a relatively narrow work bay while still allowing sufficient
room for a worker. Also, because the vehicle can operate below the level of the
15 manufacturing stations, there is no need for special mounting on the ceiling of the
factory.